



The California Zephyr



Official Publication of the VVA California State Council
An Organization Chartered By The U.S. Congress



A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 17-4

FALL 2013

CSC PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I want to thank all the California delegates who attended the National Convention in Jacksonville, FL. Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules to take part in VVA's decision making process. This was the best attended National Convention ever.



Close to 800 delegates were present for the 5 days of discussing amendments to the constitution, VVA resolutions, 2 nights of the Region caucuses and listening to what all the candidates had to say.



Steve Mackey accepts VVA's Commendation Medal that was awarded to him for all the work he has done to get Vietnam Veterans the Welcome Home they deserve.

From the opening ceremonies, to the convention business, to the voting and to the closing ceremonies; everything ran very smooth.

The food at the AVVA Luncheon and the VVA Banquet, were excellent hotel fare. Even the hotel restaurant had great food, just a little pricey as most hotels are.

I want to congratulate Elayne. During the AVVA luncheon she was awarded the AVVA National Commendation Medal. It was quite a surprise and an honor for her.

CSC Women Veterans Chair, Kate O'Hare Palmer, was named as Committee Chair to the national position of the VVA's Women Veterans Committee. We all know she will do an excellent job. Thank you Kate for accepting this position.

Also, I would like to congratulate Santa Rosa Chapter 223 as they received the Newsletter of the Year Award.

Both awards are well deserved. CA has a lot to be proud of!

On another note, suicides among the military and veterans are still up.

While active duty military and recently-returned veterans are often the focus of suicide stories in the media, according to the USDVA, nearly 70 percent of all veteran suicides are among men and women aged 50 and older. Ladies and Gentleman, this is our group of veterans. We need to keep a close eye on our fellow veterans, not just the younger ones coming home now, but also our Vietnam veterans.

Many veterans may not show any signs of intent to harm themselves before doing so, but some actions can be a sign that a veteran needs help. Those signs include but not limited to:

- Appearing sad or depressed most of the time
- Clinical depression: deep sadness, loss of interest, trouble sleeping and eating—that



State Council Presidents Gather
Steve Mackey, CSC President Center

doesn't go away or continues to get worse

- Feeling anxious, agitated, or unable to sleep
- Neglecting personal welfare, deteriorating physical appearance
- Withdrawing from friends, family, and society, or sleeping all the time
- Expressing feelings of excessive guilt or shame



L-R: Charles Earthman, Ken Holybee, John Rowan.
Chapter 223 receives Chapter Newsletter of the Year
at the National Convention - Congrats!

- Feelings of failure or decreased performance
- Feeling that life is not worth living, having no sense of purpose in life;
- Talk about feeling trapped-like there is no way out;
- Frequent and dramatic mood changes;
- Having feelings of depression, and saying that there is no solution to their problems;
- Losing interest in hobbies, work, school, or other things one used to care about;

If you feel the need for help call The Veterans Crisis Line. It connects Veterans in crisis and their loved ones with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. For free, confidential support call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1.

Have you visited the AVVA Secondary PTSD tier during our CSC meeting's? I have had many favorable comments about the content of this tier and I thank them all very much.

God Bless America
Steve Mackey

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President - Steve Mackey	7401 Candlelight Dr. Riverside, CA 92509	951-681-9531 951-231-7268	nebhuskf@aol.com president@vvacalsc.com
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THE CALIFORNIA ZEPH-

YR
PUBLISHER
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EDITOR
Tom Hohmann

Published Quarterly to all members of California VVA and AVVA as part of their membership.

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PO Box 3007
Riverside, CA 92519
<http://www.vvacalsc.com>

The opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of VVA, the State Council or its members.

Who Are The Vietnam Veterans Of America?

Founded in 1978, Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. is the only national Vietnam veterans organization congressionally chartered and exclusively dedicated to Vietnam-era veterans and their families. VVA is organized as a not-for-profit corporation and is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Service Code.

VVA'S FOUNDING PRINCIPLE

"Never again shall one generation of veterans abandon another."

PURPOSE

The purpose of Vietnam Veterans of America's national organization, the state councils, and chapters is:

To help foster, encourage, and promote the improvement of the condition of the Vietnam veteran.

To promote physical and cultural improvement, growth and development, self-respect, self-confidence, and usefulness of Vietnam-era veterans and others.

To eliminate discrimination suffered by Vietnam veterans and to develop channels of communications which will assist Vietnam veterans to maximize self-realization and enrichment of their lives and enhance life-fulfillment.

To study, on a non-partisan basis, proposed legislation, rules, or regulations introduced in any federal, state, or local legislative or administrative body which may affect the social, economic, educational, or physical welfare of the Vietnam-era veteran or others; and to develop public-policy proposals designed to improve the quality of life of the Vietnam-era veteran and others especially in the areas of employment, education, training, and health.

To conduct and publish research, on a non-partisan basis, pertaining to the relationship between Vietnam-era veterans and the American society, the Vietnam War experience, the role of the United States in securing peaceful co-existence for the world community, and other matters which affect the social, economic, educational, or physical welfare of the Vietnam-era veteran or others.

To assist disabled and needy war veterans including, but not limited to, Vietnam veterans and their dependents, and the widows and orphans of deceased veterans.

CSC VETERAN SERVICE OFFICER PROGRAM

By Dick Southern CSC Chief Service officer

Did you know that your Service Officers, that are employed by the California State Council, get over a million dollars in claims awarded each quarter of the year for veterans and their families? Well, they do and have been doing it for a number of years now and not just in the Los Angeles basin. Karen and Emily work out of the Long Beach VAMC and Bill works in the San Diego area. These are our paid employees. We have a number of volunteers throughout the state that are also Veteran Service Officers.

How are they funded? Your Service Officers are funded by the California State Council that receives funds from the California Veterans Benefit Fund, the Household Goods Donation Program and donations from Chapters and individuals. Unfortunately, sometimes all of these sources are not enough. You might remember last year when we had to furlough the paid Service Officers for four months. Well, the some fortune may await us again if we don't get some more input of funds. Our funding sources are not producing enough, at this point, to make us feel comfortable about the future.

What can you do to help out this possible situation that we are facing? You can have your chapter and/or yourself donate some funds towards the CSC Veteran Service Officer Program. The return on the investment in the

Service Officer Program is huge for veterans and their families. Send the donations to Barry Schloffel, CSC Treasurer, at 1244 SHAWS FLAT RD, SONORA, CA 95370. Please consider helping us out.

COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN CFC #11324
VVA/VSF RAISING





25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEDICATION OF THE CALIFORNIA VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL COMMEMORATION AND CEREMONIES

NOVEMBER 22 & 23, 2013

VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL, STATE CAPITOL PARK, SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA



November 22, 2013

5:30-7:30 p.m. - R & R - No Host Social. (Holiday Inn Capitol Plaza)

November 23, 2013

9:00 a.m. - POW/MIA Ceremony at the Memorial
Thunder Run, Motorcycle Ride to the Vietnam Memorial (Registration at Raley Field)

7:00 am - Pre-registration

10:00 am - Kick stands up, run begins

1:00 p.m. - 25th Anniversary Memorial Ceremony

6:00-7:00 p.m. - Pre- Banquet Social

7:00-9:00 p.m. - 25th Anniversary Memorial Banquet
(Sheraton Grand Hotel)



The election committee is not responsible for candidates information other than reporting who has qualified to run for office. The members of the committee shall always remain neutral on all issues related to the convention.

Your letter of intent must be sent to;

Ken Holybee
10311 Woodside Dr.
Forestville, CA 95436
Attention Election Committee

The following is from the CSC Constitution Article VII Section 1 paragraph b, c, and d.

b. The following Officers shall be Directors for a term continuous with their respective terms of office: President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer or Secretary/Treasurer.

c. The directors shall be elected from among the individual members in good standing of the Council by the vote of the majority of the delegates present and voting at the Biennial State Convention. Candidates that are to run for office of Director at the state level, must be a member in good standing, for a continuous period of (1) not less than 12 months preceding the annual election at which the candidates seek election and (2) candidates must have held a position as an elected Officer (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer or Secretary/Treasurer) or Director of VVA at any level, or served as an elected Chapter Delegate to the State Council, during any continuous period of twelve months prior to the date of the election. Each such director shall be elected to hold office

THIS EVENT IS FOR ALL VETERANS AND THE PUBLIC TO HONOR THOSE CALIFORNIANS WHO SERVED IN VIETNAM

“ALL GAVE SOME, SOME GAVE ALL”

[HTTP://WWW.VVACALSC.COM/PAGES/CA_VN_MEMORIAL/25TH_ANNIVERSARY/INDEX.HTML](http://www.vvacalsc.com/pages/ca_vn_memorial/25th_anniversary/index.html)

[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/EVENTS/357901990982757/?REF=22](https://www.facebook.com/events/357901990982757/?ref=22)

For more information, contact:

Ken Holybee
President, California Veterans Benefit Fund
holybee@comcast.net
(707) 887-8891

For sponsorship opportunities, contact:

Pete Conaty
Executive Director, Anniversary Committee
pconaty@sbcglobal.net
(916) 492-0550

Vendors Welcome

For more information, contact:

Don Harper, govia@comcast.net (916) 489-5669
John Reece, jhnreece@hughes.net (916) 764-0316

Thunder Run Motorcycle Rally

For more Information, contact:

VVA-500
vietnamveterans@sacvva500.org
(916) 481-6020

FUNDS FOR OUR SERVICE OFFICER PROGRAMS.

The task force believes that the entire organization of VVA the National Board of Directors, State Councils, and Chapters should take on this effort.

The task force needs and requests help from all of our members. We hope all of the State Councils that are receiving funds from VVA through the VSF will make the effort to participate in this year's CFC. Remember this is a requirement of receiving funds. State Councils who DO NOT have a service officer program and no stake in the campaign, we request your help in helping your fellow veterans. **Never Again Will One Generation of Veterans Abandon Another** This, my brothers and sisters, is our founding principle. We are aware of what the Service Officer Program has done for many of our brothers and sisters. What it is now doing for our sons and daughters. We must keep the effort alive.

VVA, as an organization, must continue to go that extra mile. We must make sure our Service Officer Programs remain in business. We look forward to a CFC banner year. This is what VVA is all about...helping our



fellow veterans.

The Task Force wishes to thank all of the VVA members, in advance, that will get involved in this year's drive. We also need to thank the Officers of VSF for their support and foresight in helping us develop the process for a plan of action. We look forward to another yeoman's effort for this year's campaign

Dick Southern Chair

CFC Special Task Force southern@lodelink.com

ELECTIONS COMING IN JUNE

Ken Holybee Elections Chair

The State Council elections and convention will be in June 2014. All positions on the board are up for election. If you would like to run for a position the election committee will be accepting letters of intent starting on January 1, 2014. Letters of intent must be postmarked by March 1, 2014. Members not meeting this deadline may run off the floor. Your letter of intent should include your full name, position you wish to run for, your membership number, chapter affiliation if any, your address, mailing address if different than physical address. Please include a copy of your DD 214 unless you are a current or past CSC board member or if you are a life member.

for a term of two years until his or her successor is elected and has qualified.

There shall be one (1) Vice President At-Large, who shall be elected from the delegates voting at the Biennial State Convention. d. There shall be one (1) District Vice President elected from each of the three (3) Districts, as set forth in Appendix I of this Constitution. Each District shall have on the Board one (1) District Vice President, representing all VVA members within their District, regardless of chapter affiliation or At-Large status. District Vice Presidents shall be elected by duly authorized voting delegates from the chapters in that district.

VVA 582

Bambi Inn Rib Cook Off Fund Raiser Huge Success

Larry, Tom and Connie Neverkovec opened up their Bambi Inn Resort and their hearts to VVA Chapter 582 for a Rib Cook Off contest and fund raiser. The combined efforts by the Bambi Inn and VVA 582 officers and members resulted in our treasurer Dean Teibel reporting a resounding \$9,450.00 net profit. President Butch Frederickson noted that these funds will go a long way in helping all needy veterans and their families in the Butte County area.

Outstanding Community Service Awards were presented to Larry, Tom and Conne Neverkovec, for their efforts. Corporate sponsors Chase Bank, Bank of America, USAA Banking, Miller Glass, PBM Manufacturing, Horn Construction, S&S Produce, The Tackle Box, Chico Scrap Metal, Deer Creek Broadcasting and Individual contributors Jon Hague, Dave Minton and other were also pivotal in making this event the best ever fund raiser for VVA 582.

The public support for this event was overwhelming, the ribs very tasty; trophies were awarded for 1st through 4th place as well as a people's choice award. Prize money started at \$500.00 and went from their.

The Officers and members of VVA 582 want to give a big right hand salute to the Neverkovecs, our corporate sponsors, volunteers and the public who came out and supported this new endeavor for VVA 582.

VVA 535

Several weeks ago we decided to build a bamboo POW cage. Our aim was to build a cage that would



authentically represent the cages used to hold American prisoners of war in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War. This project was in honor of my classmate and friend Ed Carlson, who was captured and taken Prisoner of War during the battle of Loc Ninh on April 7, 1972. When Ed was captured he was serving as the Deputy Senior Advisor to the 9th Infantry Regiment, 5th Infantry Division, Army of the Republic of Vietnam. Major Carlson spent 312 days in captivity, mostly in Cambodia. He was released on February 12, 1973 during Operation Homecoming.

Included in the post is this photo of Alvis Legate, who portrayed an American prisoner of war in the bamboo "tiger" cage that we built. Many thanks to Alvis, a gifted actor from our community. Thanks also to Jose Gonzales for his help. We would not have completed this project without his wise counsel and assistance! And thanks to George Rebane who pulled the trailer.

Fred Buehler

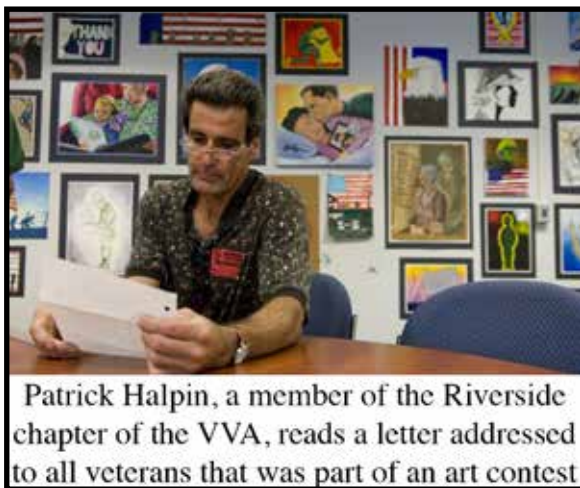
VVA 756

At Woodbridge, students honor vets through art
By Heather Youmans / For The Register

After much deliberation, several Vietnam War veterans gathered Wednesday in the teacher's lounge at Woodbridge High School in Irvine to announce the winners of the seventh annual Vietnam Veterans of America Art Contest.

The contest featured more than 63 paintings created by the high school's sophomore, junior and senior art students to honor the legacy and contribution of service men and women and their families to our country.

Long Beach Chapter 756 of the Vietnam Veterans of America, which started the contest in 2007, sponsored the event. The artwork reflected all American wars.



The entries were created by students in Claudia Posvar's advanced-level drawing, painting, AP studio, advanced painting and portfolio classes.

Posvar explored the historical and cultural aspects of wars and the military with her students. Along with



showing them past art projects and images for inspiration, she screened two films with a war motif: "Taking Chance," an HBO film starring Kevin Bacon, and "Maya Lin: A Strong Clear Vision," an Academy award-winning film about the creation of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in the District of Columbia.

"I was trying to get them to understand the emotion of it," Posvar said. "So, I had to get them into that place."

To strike a more personal chord, she also showed students a poster of one of her former Woodbridge art students, Mark Daily, who was killed in Iraq in 2007.

Students had the month of May to complete their paintings. The day before the winners were announced, members of the Long Beach VVA and north Orange County VVA Chapter 1024 spent an hour judging the paintings.

More than 60 students, along with parents, attended the emotional awards ceremony the following day. Seven veterans from the Long Beach, north Orange County and Riverside VAA chapters came decked out in their Vietnam patches, pins, hats, badges and shirts and stood proud before the students.

"We want to know who the people are that did the work," Long Beach VVA chapter President Max Stewart said. "It's always neat to see the artist."

Greg Gillaspay, a lifelong Orange County resident and member of the north Orange County VVA, was also among the veterans in attendance.

"It hits my heart," Gillaspay said pointing to the wall of student artwork. "It really does. These kids have put a lot of meaning into these pictures. They really have. It's so nice to see youth now caring. When we came home they were calling us names and yelling at us. That's all changed."

Each artist received a certificate for participating in the art contest, but, three students' work made a particularly powerful impression on the judges.

Sophomore drawing student Joanna Hsieh won third place and a \$200 scholarship from the Long Beach VVA for her complex collage of war-related vignettes using watercolor, markers and ink wash on paper.

"I was actually really shocked because there was other really great artwork up there," Hsieh said. "It was shocking, but I felt relieved that my work paid off."

Second place and a \$300 scholarship went to junior AP studio art student Irene Jeong for her painting of an elderly person's tear flowing out onto a battlefield of fallen soldiers.

"I was literally dancing around when they called me," Jeong said, giggling. "The whole time I was hoping, more than winning, that they understood my painting, because there was a lot of thought and meaning behind it."

The first- and second-place winner initially received an equal number of votes, Stewart said. So at the close of the judging period Tuesday, the veterans conducted a tie-breaking vote.

In the end, it was junior painting student Carolina Montresor who took first prize and a \$500 scholarship for her painting, which depicted a silhouetted soldier kneeling at a Vietnam-era battle cross amid an orange sunset.

"I wanted to do something that had bright colors and that was happy," she said.

With a canvas, some acrylic paint at her fingertips and the movie "Taking Chance" as her inspiration, Montresor used a rather grim battle cross – a locator symbol for soldiers killed in action – to evoke a positive message:

"The bond is never broken (between troops)," she said. "Even when (they) are lost, they still remain in spirit with (the other troops)."

Montresor moved to Irvine five years ago from South Africa, but that didn't prevent her from relating to the art project.

Carolina's mother, Samantha Montresor, said: "War affects everyone all over the place – soldiers everywhere in every country. So there's always going to be a soft nerve when it comes to honoring people that have died."

The three winners' artwork will be on permanent display at the Long Beach Veterans Administration Hospital on Seventh Street along with pieces by past contest winners. All participants' artwork will remain on display in the Woodbridge teachers lounge for a short time.

The salute to Vietnam veterans will continue July 17-21, when the north Orange County VVA chapter brings the travel replica of the Vietnam War and the Global War on Terror Remembrance Wall to the Lakeview Senior Center at Woodbridge Community Park in Irvine.

Montresor will attend the event and create a painting reflecting her experience visiting the two walls. The finished painting will be donated to the driver who will be transporting the replica to be shown at multiple stops around the country.

"I really think the kids walk away from this thinking differently," Long Beach VVA Director Kate Haplin said. "I think they have more of an awareness of what's going on with the world. I think they are certainly thinking about how these men and women are not to be forgotten."

Contact the writer: 714-796-2258 or varsityarts@ocregister.com

VVA 223

NEWS AND VIEWS - "BEST IN THE LAND"
By Charles Earthman

One of the greatest honors given to a chapter at the VVA national convention is that of Best Newsletter of the Year. In 2013 that honor went to VVA Chapter 223 of Santa Rosa, CA.

The chapter newsletter is a reflection on a chapter's ability to communicate with its members and the community. News and Views is a valuable print media conduit to the Sonoma County Veteran Community. Under the editorial direction of Brooke McKusick, we have consistently provided news and information to our members, the community, and interested readers all over the country.

For this, the Awards Committee of the Vietnam Veterans of America awarded News and Views the coveted Best Printed Newsletter of 2013. I am proud to be a part of this and take some responsibility for making this happen. There are many others who share these honors with Brooke and me. To them, we say thanks and congratulations. Let's not rest on our laurels, but rather continue to produce an award-winning publication.

CA AVVA

Who other than me will be glad to see cooler weather? I have vowed to never complain about cold weather again.



At the National Convention in Jacksonville the weather was, in my opinion, miserable. One highlight to it was; everyday in the afternoon a group of Dolphins gathered in the St James River, directly across the street from the hotel, and proceeded to entertain for a while.

AVVA was quite busy during our portion of the joint VVA/AVVA Convention. We elected a new Board of Directors and added and deleted Bylaws, most of them just general housekeeping.

Elections were held and for the first time in AVVA history, Chapter Delegates were able to vote for the candidates of their choice. CA sent one State Delegate and Alternate – Chapters 47, 53, 223, 357, 391, 472 sent one delegate and Ch 982 sent a delegate and an alternate. Everyone worked hard, took part in discussions, voiced their opinions and walked many miles around that hotel. Thanks to you all, you are the best!

Awards were given during the AVVA Luncheon on August 14, 2013. The recipients were:

President's Commendation Medal: Mokie Porter, Charlie Hobbs, Elayne Mackey, Kathy Andras & Sharon Hobbs

Fellowship Award: Rita Vitale; Member of the Year: Lynn Wesp

Scholarship recipients: William Graves Ethridge (GA



COVINA ROTARY CLUB'S FIELD OF VALOR

Covina Rotary will host the second annual Field of Valor at Sierra Vista Middle School from November 9-17, 2013. Join us for this spectacular display of patriotism, and community. Many educational activities are planned during the week. The Field will be open until 9:00 pm week nights, and 10:00 pm Friday and Saturday nights through November 16. **ADMISSION IS FREE**

Flag and event sponsorships benefit Veterans, Active Duty Military and their families, and the Ontario USO.

If you would like to volunteer, you may contact us at fieldofvalor@gmail.com

- November 9 Flag Procession 8:30 from LDS Church 656 S. Grand Avenue, Covina (near Grand and Rowland)
- November 10 Opening Ceremonies 10:00 am
- November 11 Veteran Day Ceremonies 10:00 am
- November 12 School Field Trips Field opens at 2:00
- November 13 School Field Trips, Field open @ 2:00 & Scout night 6:30
- November 14 All Clubs Day, Field Trips, Family picnic & movie 6:30
- November 15 School Field Trips Field open at 2:00
- November 16 Closing Ceremonies 10:00 am
- November 17 Striking the Field 10:00 am

To sponsor a flag or the event, please complete and return the portion below to:

Covina Rotary Club Charities

Field of Valor

P.O. Box 334

Covina, CA 91723

626-332-2978

www.covinarotaryfieldofvalor.org

____ I would like to sponsor a flag in the Field for \$35.00 each ____ I would like to volunteer at the Field

Name of Honoree: _____

Rank of Honoree: _____ (not required)

Branch of Service: _____

Any other message: _____

If you would like to sponsor more than one flag, write the information on a separate sheet and to this form. Return with your check made payable to Covina Rotary Club Charities

Your name: _____

Your email address: _____ Your phone: _____

Event Sponsorships are available. Please visit our website www.covinarotaryfieldofvalor.org.

Covina Rotary Club Charities • Field of Valor • P.O. Box 334 • Covina, CA 91723

Covina Rotary Charities is a 501(c)(3) organization
Federal ID: 95-3244214 State Charity Registration #34028

Tech) - \$500, Marissa Hamilton (Augustana College) - \$1,000. And David P. Ethridge (Kennesaw University) - \$500.

AVVA made donations in the amounts of: \$4,000.00 to the 5 Star Veterans Center in Jacksonville, FL. through our Project Friendship Program. This included VVA donations also. A donation in the amount of \$2,000.00 was presented to Betty Medecky for the Birth Defect Research for Children, Inc. <http://www.birthdefects.org/>

Kyle Orlemann South Beach Ch. 53 AVVA has brought attention to Bill S851 Caregiver Expansion and Improvement Act. This Congressional bill would expand the Veterans Family Caregiver program so that it would cover ALL generations of Veterans (it currently only covers post -9/11 Vets). Everyone is urged to contact your elected officials and ask them to support this bill.

Our executive officers for the 2013 – 2015 term are: President Sharon Hobbs (TN) – Vice President Cathy Keister (SC) – Secretary Joanna Henshaw (AZ) and Bill Williams (MT).

I was fortunate to be elected as AVVA National Region 9 Director, which means I will be working with the states of: Arizona, California, Colorado, Guam, Hawaii, Nevada, New Mexico, Philippines and Utah. I already know a lot of VVA and AVVA members from these states and am looking forward to working with them all

in keeping Region 9 the outstanding and dedicated region that we are.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to share an excerpt from a note that was written to Nina Schloffel, AVVA Secondary PTSD Chair. You all know how proud CA AVVA is of the Secondary PTSD committee and this makes us even prouder.

From a CSC Delegate/Veteran:

"I noticed that of all the talking and "Networking" and bs'ing that we did over the weekend, NONE of it attained the depth that your session did. All the other Tiers were important, but none of them so vital and personally worthwhile as the topics that you have unearthed. There are few subjects that are as widespread and important to all of us. Few that have touched us ALL, and not just once but for many in our ranks."

"So my plea is that you get emboldened and ask for more.(this references another part of the letter suggesting we seek guest speakers and professionals to join us at times) You have a voice that is needed, please don't bury it under a bushel. My plea is for you to see the next evolution of what you are trying to do and go there. Your heart sure is in the right place."

You have no idea how great this note made us all feel. Thank you Nina and thank you our dear Veteran friend!

Welcome Home,
Elayne, Chelli, Nina, Carol & Penny

VVA 47

At Chapter 47 September Meeting we met at the Military Museum in San Bernardino for our annual POW/MIA Ceremony. We had the local JROTC present and post the Colors and had the customary POW/MIA "Table" in our meeting. John Pagel, Chapter 47 member and TaskForce Omega member, gave us a historical overlook of the issue and what to look for in the future.



VVA 535

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 355 VVA and AVVA members, their families and friends !

Regrettably, I need to inform you that, We have suffered another loss of a Good Friend, Good Hearted Man, Brother Vietnam Veteran and Life member of The "LOST PATROL"- VVA Chapter 355.

Robert Smith "Smitty"! Bob Smith passed away 10/6/2013, at the age of 70 years and 5 days, after a long bout of fighting cancer! He will be missed by all that knew him.

Further info about church and funeral arrangements, will be sent out as soon as I receive it, from the family !

My Deepest Sympathy and Condolences to Robert Smith's family and friends. Please keep Bob and his family in your prayers! God Bless

VVA 391

Here is a little blurb about us recently:

A pretty active month of September Headlined by our POW/MIA Remembrance Day!

On September 14th Chapter 391 held their Annual Picnic and Bar-B-Que. The Chapter sponsored event is thrown each year, at the Chapters' expense, as a Thank You to all it's members for the hard work done during the previous year on all our Fund raisers. Two of which are finalized at the picnic.

Included in the festivities, are the naming of the two winners for our final fund raisers: The Trip for 2 to Maui and the Riffle raffle. The trip to Hawaii was won on a ticket sold to someone's friend in Pacifica, Ca. The Riffle was won by our Chapter's Chaplain.

Also, on Friday Sept. 20, we held our annual POW/MIA Recognition Day Community reminder.

Volunteers spread out over 7 or 8 locations within our area at Post Offices, Grocery Stores and Restaurants, armed with tables and chairs, for 4 hours. We bring The POW/MIA Black Poppies, all the necessary posters and literature, plus applications for new members and last but not least, a donation can in case any Poppy recipients feel the urge to donate to the chapter.

Both events were extremely successful in all facets of their purpose.

Until next time,
Al Sickle, Chapter 391, President

VVA 1031

Back in February 2013, Lenny Kerbs and Scott Wolf (VVA Chapter 1031) worked on a bathroom remodel project to help out someone in need.



Jay McFarling has worked with and for homeless vets and wounded warriors, and was a SAL and Legion Rider. Back in 2009, George Toriello (currently a VVA Life member from North Carolina) and Jay McFarling helped a homeless Marine (from the Granada campaign) who was living in his car in Santa Ana, CA. George was living in Los Angeles at the time. George and Jay talked by telephone and came up with a plan to help this Marine veteran in need. Jay drove up from San Diego with

parts to fix the Marine's car while George put the Marine up in a motel for three days. George and Jay have remained in touch over the years.

Recently Jay was afflicted with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease) and was confined to a wheelchair. The shower stall in the bathroom wasn't suited for a wheelchair, so it was difficult for Jay to bathe. In January 2013, George sent an e-mail reaching out to the VVA members on the west coast. That e-mail found its way to Lenny Kerbs and Scott Wolf at VVA Chapter 1031. Lenny contacted Jay's wife Jennie to discuss the project and set up the timeline of events. Jennie and a friend completed much of the demolition on their own by removing the shower stall insert, bathroom sink, medicine cabinet, and accessories. Lenny and Scott arrived on February 11, 2013, to finish the demolition and start the bathroom remodel project. The project included removal of the remaining chickenwire and mud, removal of the old shower pan, creating a 3 foot wall extension to provide a doorless shower area, pouring a new shower floor, installing new wall insulation, replacing the drywall around the shower area, installing backer board for the new tiled walls, removing and reinstalling the toilet, and re-tiling the entire bathroom area (shower area, toilet area, and bathroom floor). After assessing what materials were needed for the project, Lenny and Scott went to Home Depot to purchase the materials. Jay and Jennie paid for the materials; Lenny and Scott donated their time.

The project lasted from February 11 to February 26 and involved about 88 man-hours between Lenny and Scott. Scott was able to help for only a couple of days, so Lenny performed 90% of the work. Jay and Jennie were delighted that veterans from a local VVA chapter were able to help with their project. After the project was completed, they were thrilled with their new bathroom. The finishing touches included handicap support rails in the shower and around the toilet. Jay was able to use his new shower area for about 45 days. He died in mid April 2013 of ALS.

Scott Wolf
Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 1031
President
E-mail: scott@vva1031.org
Website: www.vva1031.org

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCATE'S REPORT

By Pete Conaty

On September 13 the State Legislature adjourned for the year. The Legislature will reconvene on January 6 for the second year of the 2013-14 legislative session. For the bills that were just passed out of the Legislature, they now have until October 13 for the Governor to sign or veto them. I will provide a comprehensive rundown of the final

status of all veterans legislation sponsored, supported, or tracked by the VVA-CSC after the Governor's deadline.

LEGISLATION:

Two bills have already been signed by the Governor which are of special significance to Vietnam Veterans:

AB 287, by Assemblyman Jim Frazier, requires the California Department of Veterans Affairs to annually compile a list of eligible Vietnam Veterans to be added to the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

In 1983, Assemblymember Richard E. Floyd established the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the grounds of the State Capitol in Sacramento to honor those who died during the Vietnam War. However, some veterans deserving of recognition on the memorial were not included at the time it was constructed. Some were inadvertently left off the original list, but many others died after returning from service as a direct result of injuries and illness resulting from their service in the Vietnam War. AB 287 will allow Vietnam veterans who were not included on the original memorial, but who have died as a direct result of injuries or illness suffered during the conflict, to be added to the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The bill also allows the addition of veteran names that were inadvertently left off the list, and allows veterans service organizations and individuals to submit names for consideration of inclusion on the memorial, including those who have died as a result of exposure to the pesticide Agent Orange.

AB 1289, by Assemblyman Ken Cooley, made the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Capitol Park the official state Vietnam War Veterans Memorial. This is similar to other official state symbols such as the Golden Poppy as the official state flower; the "Californian" as the official state tall ship, and the California State Military Museum in Old Sacramento as the official state military museum. AB 1289 passed unanimously through every committee and floor vote in both houses of the Legislature.

There are several Vietnam War Memorials around the state and there had been occasional efforts to make another memorial the official memorial. With the 25th Anniversary of the memorial in Capitol Park on November 23 of this year, it was decided it was time to designate it the official memorial.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEDICATION OF THE CALIFORNIA VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL

There will be ceremonies, a banquet, a reception, and a motorcycle rally at the State Capitol on November 22-23 to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the dedication of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Capitol Park. An event flyer and motorcycle rally flyer are both in this edition of the newsletter. Please distribute that information to all chapters, veterans, and the public. There are web links on the flyers where more information can be found as it becomes available.

Lodging Information

25th Anniversary of the Dedication of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial

November 22 & 23, 2013



Lodging:

Holiday Inn Capitol Plaza

Holiday Inn Capitol Plaza Room Rates: **\$84/night** (Group Code: QCV)

Parking Rates: **Garage \$16 Valet \$18**

Contact Information:

300 J. St., Sacramento, CA, 95814

(916)-446-0100

(These rates are if room is booked at least 30 days in advance, and are subject to change if purchased within 30 days of event)

Sheraton Grand Hotel

Sheraton Grand Room Rates: **\$145-185/night**

Parking Rates:

Unregistered guests: **Self \$24 Valet \$28**

Registered Guests: **Self \$18 Valet \$28**

Contact Information:

1230 J. St., Sacramento, CA, 95814

(916)-447-1700

For more information on the event or for sponsorship opportunities please contact :

Pete Conaty
(916)-492-0550
pconaty@sbcglobal.net

Ken Holybee
(707)-887-8891
holybee@comcast.net

WOMEN VETERAN COMMITTEE

REPORT

National Vva Convention
Jacksonville, FL. August 2013
By Kate O'Hare-Palmer

Welcome home from Jacksonville, Fla. It was a jump back in time into the steamy, muggy, and heat filled days of our tours in VN. !! The Jacksonville VVA chapter was gracious and welcomed us at the airport! Some of their members were there to guide us through to the shuttles for the hotel. Luckily, we were in the scenic Hyatt Regency overlooking the river and we had air conditioning. The women veterans committee is chaired by Marsha Four. She has been on the board for past 10 years and she has a committee of eight members who meet three times a year. This year's resolutions adopted by the committee and later passed in convention included: 1. Women Veteran Program Managers. Issue: VHA must ensure the compliance with the Women Veteran Program Managers Policies. Resolved, That VVA calls for congressional oversight and accountability of all VA medical center and VISN Directors' compliance with the measures defined in the VA's 2010 Handbook 1330.01. In other words, do the job that was mandated 3 years ago. 2. Military Sexual Trauma(MST.)Issue: Currently, instances of sexual assault in the military must be reported through the chain of command. The creation of a separate and independent office to address such crimes would remove barriers to reporting and provide additional protection and safety for the victims. Resolved: VVA will pursue legislation that reassigns complaint of MST by service members outside of the victim's and alleged perpetrator's immediate chain of command. 3. Military Sexual Trauma Treatment For Guard and Reserve. Issue: Members of the Reserve forces and National Guard who experience MST during weekend drills/battle assemblies and annual training are not eligible for treatment from the VA. Resolved, That: The Vietnam Veterans of America calls for legislation to allow members of the NG and Reserves, who experience MST while on drill, battle assemblies, and annual training, to receive MST-related care from VA Medical facilities at no cost.

The Women Veterans Committee Breakfast was well attended. The guest speaker was Anu Bhagwati, a Marine, and director of Service Women Action Network(SWAN) This organization was established in 2007 to provide women veterans with resources and community support to heal their wounds and readjust to civilian society. It has become a groundbreaking 501c3 human rights organization providing national policy advocacy and direct services to servicewomen and women veterans. Their contact phone is (646)569-5200. Ms. Bhagwati reported that there are several areas they are focusing on. These include: women serving in combat, MST, marital violence, MST claims issues, reproductive health care for both men and women, don't ask don't tell, and spousal benefits. She talked about the status of the Ruth Moore Act, 2013. It has been taken up by the Senate's committee on Veterans' Affairs, after being unanimously passed in the House on June 4, 2013. There are six more senators needed to sign on to the bill for its passage. This bill will make a huge difference in the lives of thousands of veterans who are survivors of MST and are struggling to get the benefits they are owed.

113th CONGRESS

1st Session

S. 294

Ruth Moore Act of 2013

A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the disability compensation evaluation procedure of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for veterans with mental health conditions related to military sexual trauma, and for other purposes. Companion bill HR 671 – passed House June 04, 2013.

In closing my report, the week was hectic and totally filled with events. We had a beautiful banquet on Saturday evening with a huge turnout. It was an honor to meet Guion Bluford, engineer astronaut, and first African American to travel in space in 1983 aboard the Challenger. We also met Arlo Guthrie, a great supporter of Vietnam veterans. Hope that the next convention in Springfield, Illinois will tempt others in our chapter to come.

MILITARY JUSTICE IMPROVEMENT ACT 2013-S.967

This bill has passed the House and is now coming against a divided Senate. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand(D-N.Y.)has been working hard to get the 51 or more votes for her amendment, but getting the filibuster-breaking 60 votes is not a sure thing. The core of this bill is to remove

the Pentagon's chain of command for prosecutions of Military Sexual Assault Crimes. The Jag offices would be given final control over these trials. This would mirror private sectors handling of sexual assault crimes. This is the largest overhaul to the military's modern-day justice system since its creation in the 50's. This change is needed to assure victims assurances that they'll get justice after reporting an alleged crime. VVA, Service Women's Action Network(SWAN), and Iraq Afghanistan Veterans Association(IAVA) support this bill. VVA National voted on a resolution to support this bill in Jacksonville, Fla. at our convention. We are one of the few veteran service organizations to make a stand on this bill. At this moment there are 46 senators supporting this bill. I would urge all of you to follow this bill's progress and contact your area's senator's office.

"When Seth was young, his arms would go rigid for no reason. Tests by pediatric neurologists at Cedars-Sinai Hospital, affiliated with the UCLA Medical Center, provided no answers," said Earp. Despite his neurological problems, Seth was a bright, intellectually curious student with advanced language skills who hoped to become an English teacher. He wrote short stories and poetry. He played the piano. "Seth's seizures continued.... There was no warning, no pattern, no regularity.... Over the years, test after test produced no answers." On Christmas Eve 2009, at the age of 32, Seth died at home after a violent seizure. "Seth had wanted to have brain surgery to remove the part of the brain that was causing his seizures," said Earp. "The Chief of Neurology at UCLA wasn't eager to do the surgery, because it would have involved Seth's frontal lobe, which was far riskier than temporal lobe surgery. Seth never had a chance to be a regular kid."



FACES OF AGENT ORANGE:

Zack Earp
By Jim Doyle

The worst thing is not having an answer," says former California State Council President and longtime VVA activist Zack Earp. "I know there are lists of birth defects and stories about how Agent Orange affects veterans and their children, but still, I don't have any definitive answers." Like other Vietnam veterans, Earp is deeply concerned about the effects of his exposure to Agent Orange while patrolling the DMZ from Dong Ha to Con Thien for 8 months in 1967-1968, where nearly 180 thousand gallons of toxic herbicides were sprayed. Earp has battled prostate cancer, and he wrestles with Parkinson's disease, but what weighs on him is how his



three sons and his grandchildren have been affected. "I've reviewed many of the AO stories," says Earp. "All of these kids have very serious health issues, and my kids' health issues aren't as obvious or as serious, but I still wonder, was it me?" Earp's oldest son, Clayton, was born in 1972 with a heart murmur. He has fought a lifelong battle with hives. "He has these large welts all over his body, head to toe," said Earp. As an adolescent, Clayton experienced uncontrollable neurological tics.

Seth, born in 1977, exhibited more profound health issues. At 16, he began experiencing grand mal seizures, which precipitated numerous trips to the hospital. Efforts to identify the causes of his seizures were inconclusive.



Zack (left) receiving the Purple Heart at Camp Pendleton U.S. Naval Hospital

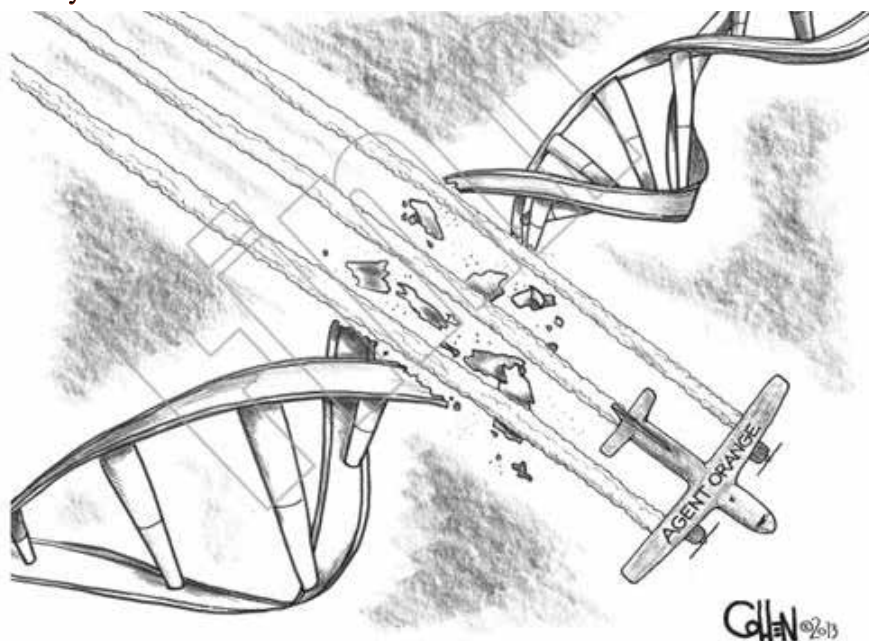


Seth, Josh, Zack, and Clayton



Seth and his mustang, which he was never able to drive due to his seizures

Earp's third son, Joshua, was born in 1978, and although his was a normal birth, "I could feel something was wrong," he said. By the time Joshua was 15 months old, he was in respiratory distress and had to be hospitalized at March Air Force Base near the family home in Riverside, California. "He couldn't keep any food down. He weighed about 12 pounds, less than half the normal weight of a baby his age. He was put into an oxygen tent with pneumonia." After consultations with a succession of specialists, it was determined that Joshua had an obstruction in his throat as well as a hole in the upper chamber of his heart—atrial septal defect. "If that wasn't enough, the poor kid's main coronary artery was going to the wrong side of his heart," said Earp. "Three boys in six years, each with birth defects, what was I supposed to think?" At 2 years 3 months of age, Josh underwent surgery to correct his heart defect, but the damage had been done. His growth was stunted, and he never matched his contemporaries in size. He was able to resume typical "kid activities" but did not have the stamina to keep up. "Josh had to stop for a break all the time," Earp said. "I think his limitations contributed to his anger issues later in his life. I don't think he was ever able to relate to his peer



group.” “None of my boys had a normal childhood,” said Earp. “All three of them were bright and inquisitive, but each of them had health issues that affected the way they lived and played. Today, Clayton, the healthiest of my three, still lives with the hives all over his body.

“For all his neurological problems, Seth lived a full life; he had rich friendships and experiences. He suffered quietly with his seizures. Though he was never able to drive, his friends and family helped out, and if we weren’t available, he rode the bus.” Earp wages a daily battle with Parkinson’s; his prostate cancer is currently in remission, but his health issues are secondary to the concerns he has for his sons. Now Earp’s worries extend to his grandchildren. “My granddaughter recently attempted suicide,” he says, pausing to collect his thoughts. “I can’t make sense of all this.” “We need answers. I think we are far beyond the blame game at this point, but it’s not too late to stand in the public square and wave signs and raise our voices. If we can engage the public in our mission, we can be successful,” said Earp. “If we know our exposure to Agent Orange caused these problems, it makes the search for solutions easier. It puts treatment and care within reach. Is that too much to ask?”

Significant numbers of Vietnam veterans have children and grandchildren with birth defects related to exposure to Agent Orange. To alert legislators and the media to this ongoing legacy of the war, we are seeking real stories about real people. If you wish to share your family’s health struggles that you believe are due to Agent Orange/dioxin, send an email to mporter@vva.org or call 301-585-4000, Ext. 146.


Many Thanks To VVA National Sponsors VVA Buckeye State Council VVA North Dakota State Council California Veterans Benefits Fund Missouri Vietnam Veterans Foundation Vietnam Veterans of Michigan Vietnam Veterans Peace Initiative Chapter 176, Centralia, Illinois Nona Bear Dan Stenvold Herb Worthington John Weiss Susan Carson and the Carson Family Foundation Chapter 635 Oconomowoc, Wisconsin Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America Dan Carr Mr. and Mrs. Ken Porizek AVVA Chapter 862 VVA Illinois State Council Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc., Pennsylvania State Association Kenneth Trautman Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Owen Mr. and Mrs. John Rowan Gerald Yamamoto Mary Graham Jack Devine Larry Holman Mr. and Mrs. Honorio Barcia Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Buford Thomas Corey Janet Alheit and Douglas Crane Marsha Four Peggy Goldman and the Twelve Twenty-One Fund Mr. and Mrs. Robert Graham Mr. and Mrs. Donald C. Morris Mr. and Mrs. Nigel Weston

AO & PROSTATE

Agent Orange as a risk factor for high-grade prostate cancer
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23670242>

Abstract
BACKGROUND:
Agent Orange (AO) exposure (AOe) is a potential risk factor for the development of prostate cancer (PCa). However, it is unknown whether AOe specifically increases the risk of lethal

Alvord District Stadium to be Named for K.R. Zack Earp



The Board of Education took action on September 19 to name the Alvord District Stadium after K. R. Zack Earp. Zack was an active member of the Alvord District Stadium Committee, working hard to raise funds to build the District Stadium. In addition, Zack has been involved with Alvord as a student, classified employee, certificated employee, administrator and finally a Board Member. Zack is currently a member of the Alvord Educational Foundation. Zack also served his country earning a Purple Heart for injuries he received from stepping on a land mine in 1968 in Vietnam.

PCa. The objective of this study was to determine the association between AOe and the risk of detecting high-grade PCa (HGPCa) (Gleason score ≥ 7) on biopsy in a US Veteran cohort.

METHODS:
Risk factors included clinicodemographic and laboratory data from veterans who were referred for an initial prostate biopsy. Outcomes were defined as the presence versus the absence of PCa, HGPCa, or low-grade PCa (LGPCa) (Gleason score ≤ 6) in biopsy specimens. Risk among AOe veterans relative to unexposed veterans was estimated using multivariate logistic regression. Separate models were used to determine whether AOe was associated with an increased risk of PCa, HGPCa, or LGPCa.

RESULTS:
Of 2720 veterans who underwent biopsy, PCa was diagnosed in 896 veterans (32.9%), and 459 veterans (16.9%) had HGPCa. AOe was associated with a 52% increase in the overall risk of detecting PCa (adjusted odds ratio, 1.52; 95% confidence interval, 1.07-2.13). AOe did not confer an increase in the risk of LGPCa (adjusted odds ratio, 1.24; 95% confidence interval, 0.81-1.91), although a 75% increase in the risk of HGPCa was observed (adjusted odds ratio, 1.75; 95% confidence interval, 1.12-2.74). AOe was associated with a 2.1-fold increase (95% confidence interval, 1.22-3.62; $P < .01$) in the risk of detecting PCa with a Gleason score ≥ 8 .

CONCLUSIONS:
The current results indicated that an increased risk of PCa associated with AOe is driven by an increased risk of HGPCa in men who undergo an initial prostate biopsy. These findings may aid in improved PCa screening for Vietnam-era veterans.

Posted by AgentOrangeZone at 8:08 AM

WHAT BOOMERS NEED TO KNOW MEDICARE

by Casey Dowd-Fox Business

Medicare open enrollment is just around the corner, and this season could be a busy one with many seniors looking for a new plan because of changes coming to Part D and the launch of the new federally-run health insurance exchanges.

According to Health and Human Services Secretary



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*4.25% - Estimated total monthly payment/APR based on a \$200K sales price, no down payment & financing of the VA funding fee under the CalVet/VA program. \$200K assessed value, mandatory hazard, and disaster indemnity insurance. Your actual payment can vary due to replacement costs for your home, location, local taxes, fees, and assessments and subsequent use of VA benefit, etc.
** Not all buyers will qualify.

Kathleen Sebelius, the average premium of Medicare Advantage plans is projected to increase by \$1.64 in 2014 from last year, coming to \$32.60.

The annual enrollment season to make change to Medicare Part D coincides with the launch of the Affordable Care Act's health insurance exchange program-but experts warn boomers not to get the two confused. Saying the ACA exchanges will likely not affect them since if you're covered through Medicare, you don't need to purchase a plan through the health insurance marketplace. If you're not on Medicare, but you have retiree health benefits, you're also covered under the federal regulations.

Pharmacy benefit management firm Express Scripts Holding's recent survey of more than 1,000 seniors enrolled in Medicare shows some confusion on what the new health-care law requires. Nearly one third wrongfully believe the ACA raises the Medicare eligibility age, with 68 being the average new age cited. Almost half of the respondents are considering temporary employment to help cover new expenses and 20% say they are skipping doctor appointments and delaying medication refills in anticipation of higher costs.

Clearly boomers and older Americans are worried about the health care, so I spoke with Paula Muschler, operations manager, Allsup Medicare Advisor, who offered the following tips on what boomers need to know about the changes to the upcoming Medicare programs.

Here is what Muschler had to say:

Boomer: What does the Medicare annual open enrollment period mean for consumers?

Muschler: Medicare annual open enrollment is the one time each year when all Medicare beneficiaries have the opportunity to review their coverage and switch plans for the next year. It runs from Oct. 15 through Dec. 7, and your new coverage starts on Jan. 1, 2014.

Boomer: Will Medicare be part of the health insurance marketplace under the Affordable Care Act and can Medicare recipients shop for coverage in the marketplace?

Muschler: Medicare is not part of the health insurance marketplace under the ACA. People who have Medicare coverage meet the ACA health insurance requirement. They do not need to have other coverage. And Medicare beneficiaries will not find plans applicable to them on the health insurance exchange serving their state. They should instead contact Medicare.gov or a Medicare plan specialist to shop for Medicare plans that meet their needs.

Boomer: What changes, if any, will there be to prescription drug (Part D) coverage for 2014?

Muschler: Monthly drug premiums are likely to be about the same as last year, with an average \$31 for a basic prescription drug plan. The initial Part D deductible decreases by \$15 to \$310. Also, the donut hole—the gap in prescription drug coverage—will be \$80 smaller because coverage limits have changed.

Beneficiaries definitely need to review the Annual Notice of Change (ANOC) and Evidence of Coverage (EOC) that their providers send them for any changes. Their Part D plan could change the medications it covers, where they can buy medications, or make changes that increase costs. Depending on where someone lives, they may have more than 30 Part D plans available. So if their current plan isn't going to meet their needs, they should look for a plan that will.

Boomer: Should we expect any changes to premiums for Part B coverage?

Muschler: Part B premiums have changed in each of the past three years, so it's likely we'll see a change again this year when new premiums are announced in October. Additionally, because Part B premiums (and Part D premiums) are based on the beneficiary's income and those income thresholds are frozen at 2010 levels, more individuals could see their premiums change.

Boomer: Will there be any changes to the Medicare Advantage Plan offerings?

Muschler: Because there are so many Medicare Advantage plans offered, we can definitely expect some plans will see changes. Examples of changes include different premiums, deductibles, co-pays, or changes to procedures, doctors and medical facilities covered. It's possible some plans will discontinue service—providing beneficiaries another important reason to shop around.

People have an average of 20 Medicare Advantage plans to choose from. It's extremely important that beneficiaries review the notices from their providers for any changes to ensure they have coverage they need. If their plan no longer meets their needs, they can switch to a plan that does during the Oct. 15-Dec. 7 annual enrollment period.

Boomer: Why should someone consider changing plans each year, instead of sticking with what they have?

Muschler: People wanting to cut their health-care costs are often looking for new plans each year. Another

reason people switch plans is they find out that their plan is not going to cover the drugs or medical treatment they will need next year. Other reasons for switching plans include moving to a new area, changes in their health, or plans to travel frequently.

Even if you think your plan is okay, it's a good idea to use annual enrollment to take a closer look. It's possible you could find a much better plan, with more benefits or lower costs—maybe it's new to your area or you haven't previously seen it.

Boomer: If I'm on 'Original Medicare', doesn't that mean I don't really need to do anything during annual open enrollment?

Muschler: That's not necessarily the case. People with Original Medicare usually have a prescription drug Part D plan, so this is the time to review that coverage. Their Part D plan may have changes in store for 2014. To avoid being surprised by any new costs or drug provisions—they should take a look at their coverage. They may shop around and find a plan that covers their needs at a lower cost. Also, it's possible that someone on Original Medicare could find more benefits with a Medicare Advantage plan. This can be especially true for someone with a particular health condition that requires certain treatments. They may find a Medicare Advantage plan that is better suited for them, possibly at a comparable or lower cost.

Boomer: Is there any way to make Medicare shopping simpler than it is?

Muschler: Many people try to do that by taking a shortcut when they first enroll. They use Original Medicare and then pick Part D and supplemental plans that their friends or family have told them are good. But there are some risks with that approach. Each person's health situation is different, so something that works for your relative may not work for you. Also, they may end up just paying too much money or not having coverage when they really need it. The good news is there are Medicare specialists available to dig into the nitty-gritty and make this an easier process.

WHAT IS THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT?

The Affordable Care Act, also known as the health care law, was created to expand access to coverage, control health care costs and improve health care quality and care coordination. The health care law does not change VA health benefits or Veterans' out-of-pocket costs.

Three things you should know:

- 1 - VA wants all Veterans to receive health care that improves their health and well-being.
- 2 - If you are enrolled in VA health care, you don't need to take additional steps to meet the health care law coverage standards. The health care law does not change VA health benefits or Veterans' out-of-pocket costs.
- 3 - If you are not enrolled in VA health care, you can apply at any time.

Veterans Enrolled in VA Health Care

The good news is that Veterans enrolled in VA health care programs have health coverage that meets the new health care law's standard. You do not have to take any additional steps to have health coverage. Read more if enrolled...

Veterans Not Enrolled in VA Health Care

Veterans not currently enrolled in VA health care program can apply for enrollment at any time. Read more about enrolling...

Family Members

VA offers health care benefits for certain family members of Veterans through programs such as the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) and the Spina Bifida program. Read more about VA family programs...

Your family members who are not enrolled in a VA health care program should use the Marketplace to get coverage.

Additional Health Care Law Information

We understand you may have questions about the health care law and how it might affect you and your family. We compiled basic information about the health care law to help you make informed decisions about your health care. Let us know if you have questions regarding the health care law and your VA health care at 1-877-222-VETS (8387). After all, ensuring you receive quality health care is not just our obligation, it's also our privilege.

ARE YOU AWARE OF THE VA'S VETERANS CANTEEN SERVICE

Your Retail Exchange Store.

Established in 1946, Veterans Canteen Service (VCS) was created to provide articles of merchandise and services at reasonable prices to Veterans enrolled in VA healthcare system, caregivers, and visitors. Since its conception, the mission continues as VCS provides retail, food, vending and other services, at great value, in VA hospitals and out-patients clinics across the country. Also, if you're enrolled in the VA healthcare system you are eligible to shop VCS PatriotStoreDirect 1-800 Special Order program offering over 40 name brand vendors including tires, Craftsman tools, brand name large appliances and mattresses. Call 1-800-664-8258 M-F 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. to shop VCS special order. For enrolled Veterans who prefer to shop online, the All Services Exchange Online Store offers thousands of items at an excellent value. Shop online at www.vacanteen.va.gov/OnlineCatalog.php or call 1-800-745-9707.

VCS is also proud to "Give Back" to the VA community by supporting the VA's Rehabilitation Games, Fisher House, Poly-Trauma Centers for OIF/OEF/OND Veterans, disaster relief efforts and VA's Homeless Veterans Program. Visit VCS online at www.vacanteen.va.gov for more information.

VCS is part of your benefits. Take advantage of it!

JOHN ROWAN TO SERVE FIFTH TERM AS NATIONAL PRESIDENT OF VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

(Washington, D.C.)--John Rowan was reelected August 16 to a fifth term as National President of Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) at the organization's 16th National Convention in Jacksonville, Florida. Rowan, who was elected to VVA's highest office in 2005, has served as the chairman of VVA's Conference of State Council Presidents, for three terms on the organization's Board of Directors, and as president of VVA's New York State Council. He served as a linguist in the U.S. Air Force's 6990 Security Squadron in Vietnam and at Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, providing the Strategic Air Command with intelligence on North Vietnam's SAM sites to protect U.S. bombing missions.

Rowan was a founding member and the first president of VVA Chapter 32 in Queens, New York. He retired from city service as an investigator with the City of New York's Comptroller's Office. He lives in Middle Village, New York, with his wife, Mariann.

Disabled veterans can call to bypass the security check at airports. They get a quick easy security check then load on the plane. 1-855-787-2227.



VVA accepts donations of all kinds, but we especially need clothing.

Clothing of all types & sizes
(men's, ladies, children's, baby's)
Clothing accessories
Shoes (all kinds)
Baby items
House and glassware
Books, toys, bikes
Stereos, radios, portable TVs
All bedding, draperies, curtains
Kitchenware
Usable small furniture & rugs
Small appliances
Tools (all kinds)
Jewelry and cosmetics
ALMOST ANYTHING!
(888) 518-VETS (8387)
Visit: <http://www.vvadonations.org>

Marsha Four of Springfield, Pennsylvania, was elected to serve as Vice President; Bill Meeks, Jr., of The Woodlands, Texas, was reelected as Secretary; and Wayne Reynolds of Athens, Alabama, was reelected as VVA's Treasurer. In addition, 19 National Board of Directors were elected: Ten At-Large and nine Regional. The At-Large directors are Charlie Hobbs (TN); Dan Stenvold (ND); Felix Peterson (OK); Jerry Yamamoto (CA); Richard C. DeLong (LA); Pastor Toro, Jr. (NY); Linda Blakenship (AL); Joe Jennings (OH); Jim Pace (WA); and Joe Kristek (NC).

The nine Regional directors elected to serve a 2013-2015 term are: Region 1, John Miner (VT); Region 2, Herb Worthington (NJ); Region 3, Sara McVicker (MD); Region 4, Bob Barry (GA); Region 5, Dennis Cohoon (MI); Region 6, John Margowski (WI); Region 7, Allen J. Manuel (LA); Region 8, Tom Owen (OR); and Region 9, Dick Southern (CA).

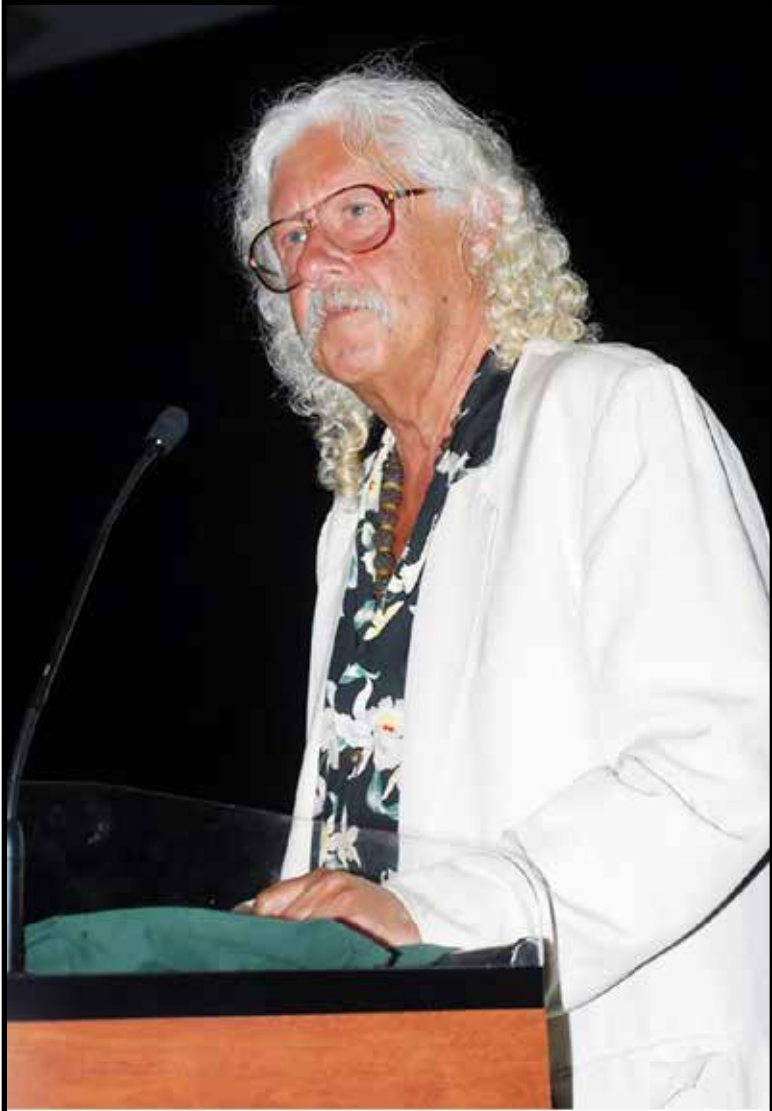
2013
CONVENTION
PHOTOS



Members of the CA Delegation at the Florida Vietnam Memorial



Ceremony at the Florida Vietnam Memorial



Arlo Guthrie Speakes to Convention



CSC 1st VP John Crooker with Arlo Guthrie (who received the President's Award for Excellence in the Arts)



VA Secretary The Honorable Eric K. Shinseki



Jerry and his hot rod and he didn't even hit anyone that we know of.



Chapter 223 Delegates Taking A Break From The Convention Floor



Barry & Nina Schloffel
From Chapter 391



**25th ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEDICATION OF THE CALIFORNIA VIETNAM
VETERANS MEMORIAL**

ALL CALIFORNIA RIDERS

Supporting All Veterans

**THUNDER RUN TO THE
CALIFORNIA MEMORIAL**

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2013
STATE CAPITOL PARK, SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

Rally, Register and Form up at Raley Field, (West Sacramento)

7:00 am - Pre-registration starts

10:00 am - KSU and Run to the Memorial

1:00 – Ceremony at the CA Vietnam Veterans Memorial

Pre-Registration Fee

\$20 for Rider, \$10 for Passenger

(Includes Commemorative Pin & Registration for Ride)

For additional Information

Contact:

VVA-500

vietsamveterans@sacvva500.org

or

(916)-481-6020



VVA Chapter 223 - Postal Permit
PO Box 1583
Santa Rosa, CA 95402

VVA CA State Council contact info inside - page 2

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To:

In this issue:

- Chapter Activities-Events
- National Convention Photos
- Legislative Information
- Veteran Benefit Information
- Agent Orange Information
- And more...

VVA & CSC Meeting Dates & Events

Zephyr Deadline for January issue December 21, 2013
CSC Full Council - October 25-27, 2013, Fresno, CA
CSC Full Council January 24-26, 2014, Fresno, CA
CSC Full Council - April 25-27, 2014, Fresno, CA
CSC Full Council - August 23-24, 2014, Fresno, CA